

### **3. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES**

#### **3.1 Regional and Project Setting**

Agriculture is a very important part of the Mendocino County landscape and economy.<sup>1</sup> In 2002, the total value of agricultural production was almost \$127 million. The county ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> in agricultural production value among the state's 58 counties. In 2002, there were 2,300 wage and salaried employees in agricultural establishments in Mendocino County. Leading crops in the county are wine grapes, Bartlett pears, cattle and calves, milk, and nursery stock. In 1997, Mendocino County had 1,092 farms with a total acreage of 638,566 acres; the area of cropland harvested was 30,425 acres; and 28.4 percent of the area of the county was in farms.

Timber is an important agricultural product in Mendocino County. Timber harvest volumes and values are discussed in detail in Section III.6.4. Mendocino County has about 1.3 million acres of timberland, with 854 thousand acres of land classified as Timber Production Zone (TPZ).<sup>2</sup> TPZ lands are classified by counties, under the California Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976, as specially zoned for timber production and compatible uses. Land use in a TPZ district is restricted to growing and harvesting timber as well as certain compatible uses, and establishes a presumption that timber harvesting will occur on such lands. These lands are assessed based on their ability to grow trees.

The Mendocino County General Plan land use designation for JDSF is Forest Lands and the zoning is TPZ, meaning that land use is restricted to growing and harvesting timber, as well as certain compatible uses, and there is a presumption that timber harvesting will occur. The Forest Lands designation applies to land suited for and appropriately retained for the growing, harvesting, and production of timber and timber-related products. Uses consistent with the Forest Lands designation include forestry, timber processing, agricultural uses, cottage industries, residential uses, recreation, and uses determined to be related to and compatible with forestry.

Topography of JDSF ranges from moderately to steeply sloped, with some areas of low slope in the western portions of the Forest. JDSF is predominantly forested land. Although agricultural use is allowed within TPZ zoned and Forest Land designated land, no portion of JDSF land is specifically classified as agricultural land nor has it historically been used for non-timber related agricultural purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> Data source for this paragraph is the California Statistical Abstract, [http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/fs\\_data/stat-abs/toc.htm](http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/fs_data/stat-abs/toc.htm).

<sup>2</sup> California Statistical Abstract, [http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/fs\\_data/stat-abs/toc.htm](http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/fs_data/stat-abs/toc.htm).

### 3.2 Significance Criteria

CEQA states that a project would be considered to have a significant effect on agricultural resources if it would result in one or more of the following:

- Convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of Statewide Importance.
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
- Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use.

### 3.3 Impacts

**Impact 1: Convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of Statewide Importance. (No impact)**

JDSF is not located in an area designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or a Farmland of Statewide Importance. Neither the project nor any of the alternatives will convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

**Mitigation:** None required.

**Impact 2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. (No Impact)**

Neither the project nor any of the alternatives, except Alternative A, will conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. The Mendocino County General Plan land use designation for the parcel is Forest Lands and the zoning is TPZ. Since no timber harvesting will occur under Alternative A, the full intent of TPZ zoning will not be met, though timber growth will continue to occur and this growth could potentially be captured in the future.

**Mitigation:** None required

**Impact 3: Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use. (No Impact)**

Neither the project nor any of the alternatives will involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

**Mitigation:** None required

### 3.4 Alternatives

A comparison of impacts among alternatives is presented in Table VII.3.1.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Table VII.3.1. Comparison of Agriculture Impacts by Alternatives.						
Alternatives						Discussion
Impact*	1	2	3	4	5	*Impact Levels: (1) Beneficial (2) No Impact (3) Less than Significant (4) Less than Significant after Mitigation (5) Significant–Mitigation Not Feasible
Impact 1. Convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of Statewide Importance.						
Alt. A						None of the alternatives will convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						
Impact 2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.						
Alt. A						Since there is no timber harvest under this alternative, the timber harvest intent of TPZ zoning will not be met, though timber growth will continue and could potentially get captured through future harvest.
Alt. B						Alternatives B through F will not conflict with existing TPZ zoning.
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						

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<b>Impact 3. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use.</b>						
Alt. A						None of the alternatives will involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						